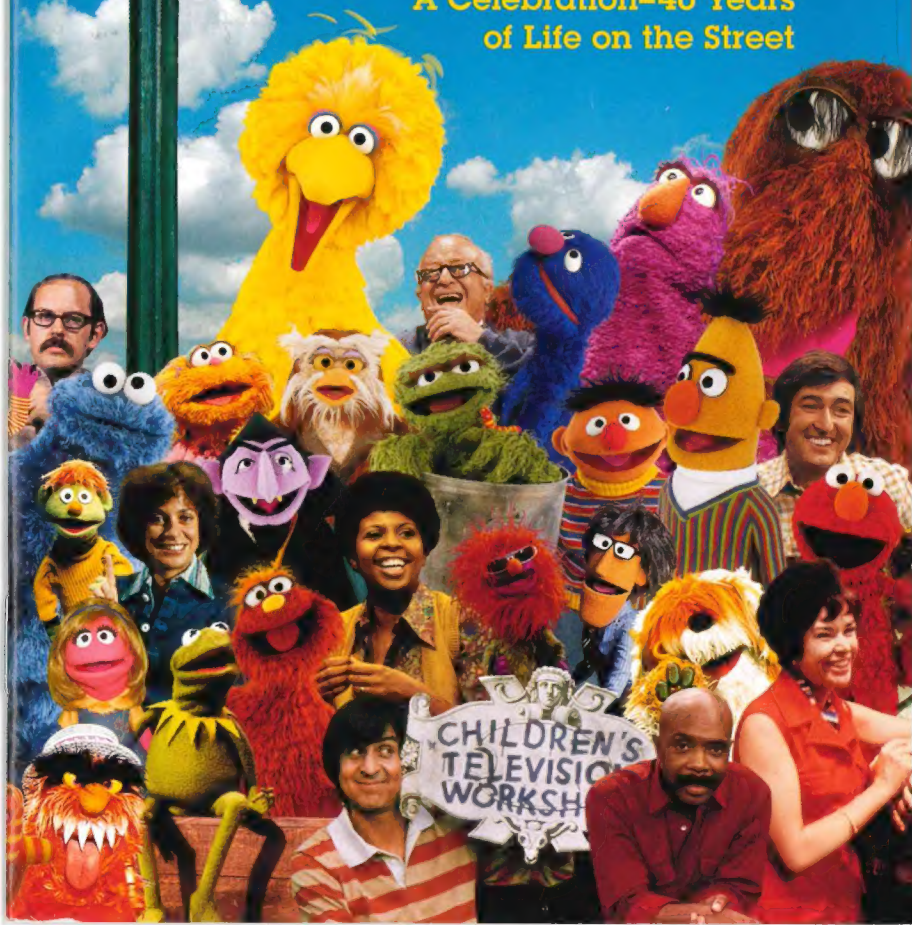
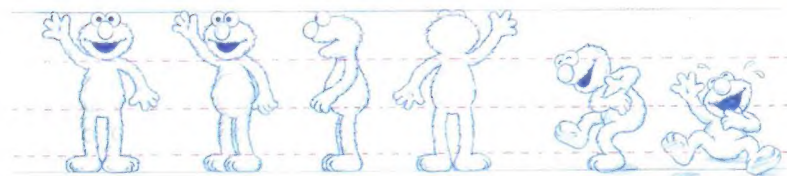
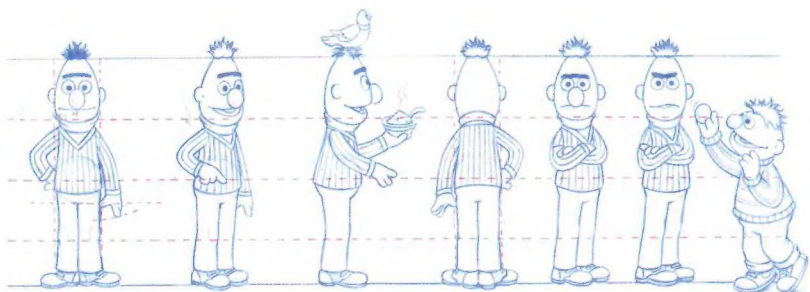
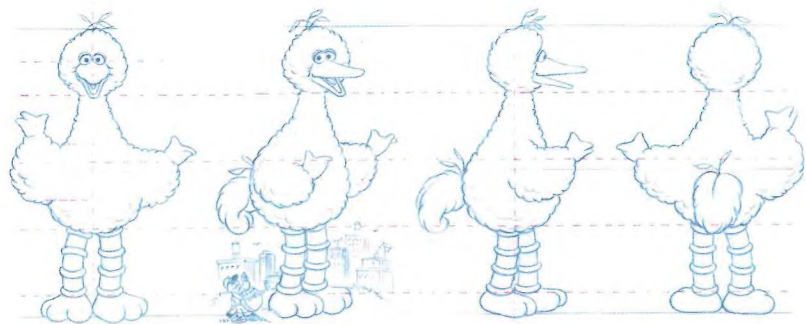


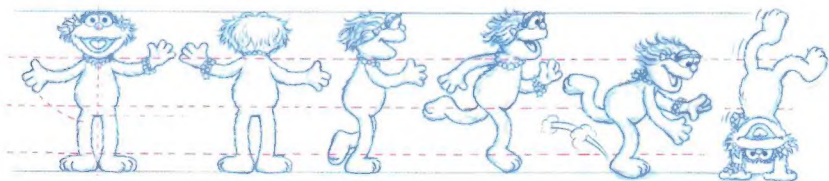
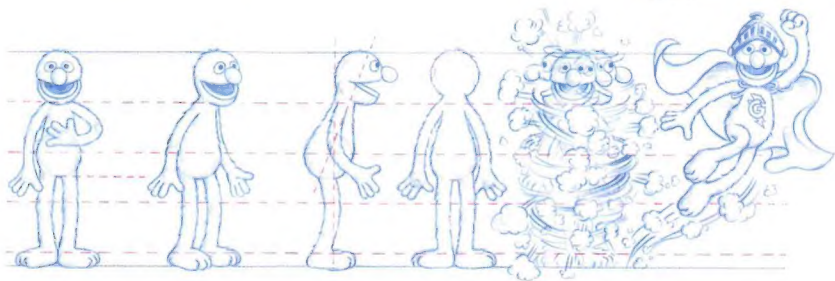
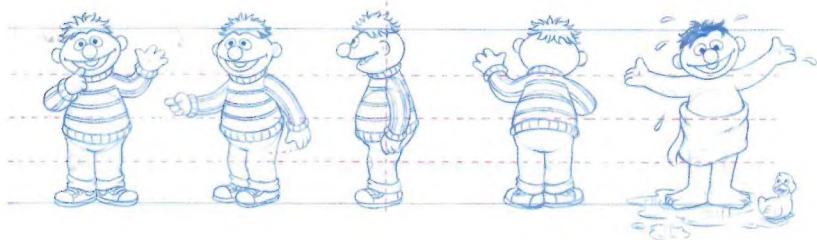
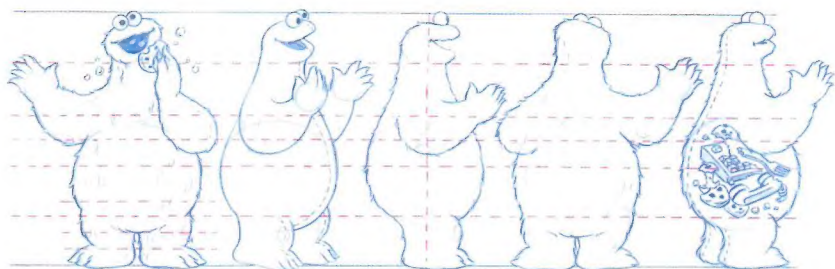
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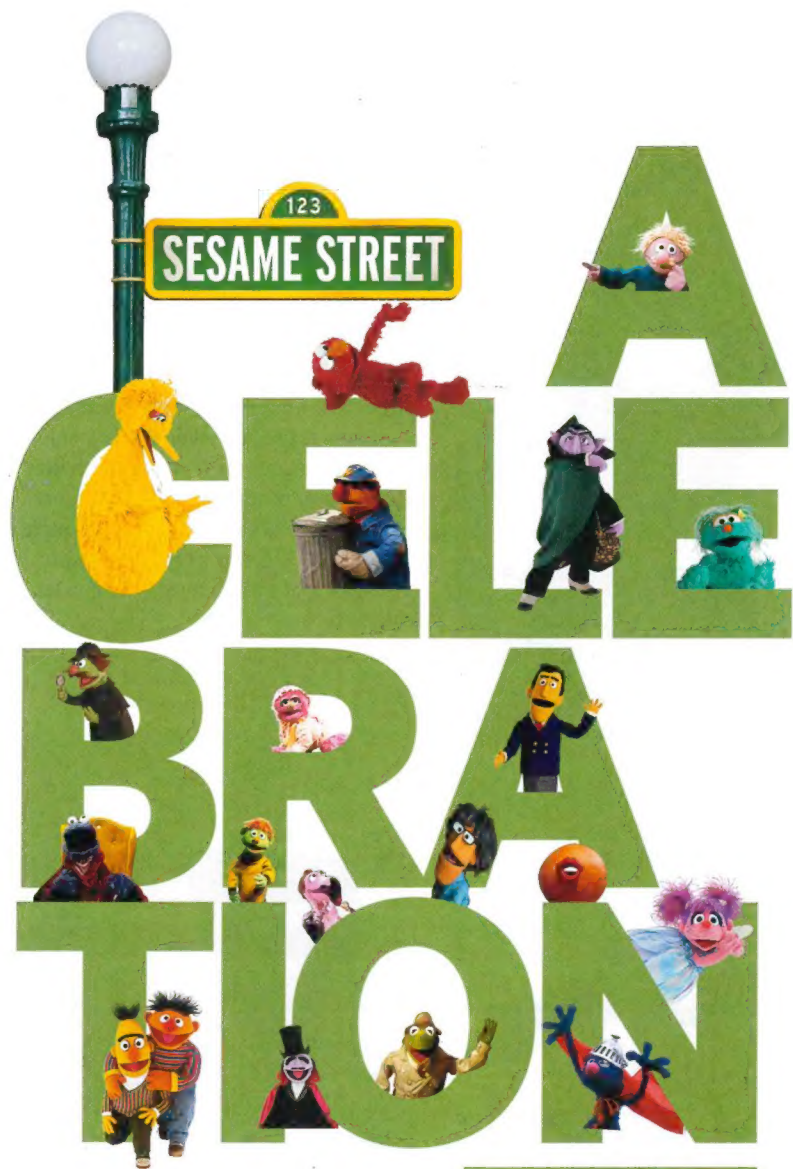
SESAME STREET®

A Celebration—40 Years
of Life on the Street









40 YEARS OF LIFE ON THE STREET

A BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT THE PEOPLE,
PUPPETS, SONGS, SCRIPTS, AND SHOW

1960s
1960s

40 Years of Sunny Days



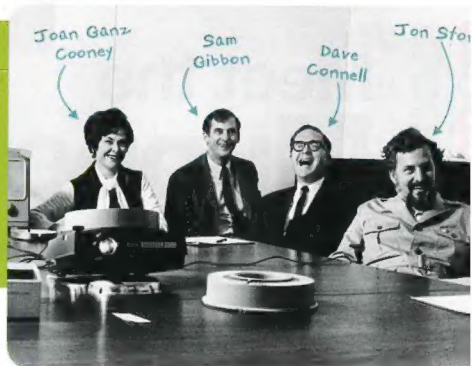
Joan's social and educational interests merged perfectly in the development of the new show. She later reminisced: "It never occurred to us that we couldn't change the world."

It all began in the late 1960s with a revolutionary idea: television could be used as a medium to make entertainment educational and education entertaining. The idea was the brainchild of Joan Ganz Cooney, a young television documentary producer, and Lloyd Morrisett, the vice president of the Carnegie Corporation. The two were to become co-founders of the Children's Television Workshop.

Joan Ganz Cooney, Lloyd Morrisett and Gerry Lesser (Chairman to the Advisory Board) at an early planning session



To help bring their ideas to life, Joan and Lloyd assembled a team of extraordinary individuals: Dave Connell (vice president and executive producer), Samuel Y. Gibbon, Jr. (producer), and Jon Stone (executive producer and principal director for the next twenty-some years).



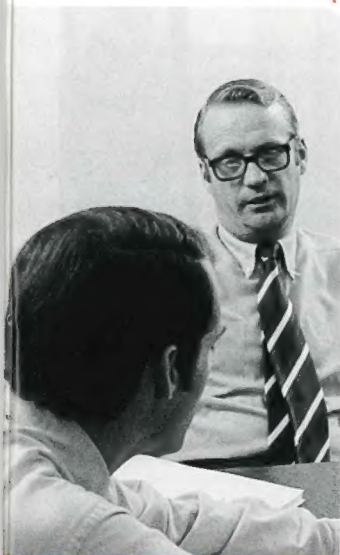
“I’ve always said of our original team that developed and produced *Sesame Street*: Collectively, we were a genius.”

—JOAN GANZ COONEY



It took some time to settle on a name for the new show. After playing around with *The Itty-Bitty, Farm-and-City, Witty-Ditty, Nitty-Gitty, Dog-And-Kitty, Pretty-Little-Kiddie Show*, the team finally settled on *Sesame Street*.

These photos are from the original pitch reel for *Sesame Street* produced in 1968



Blue Anything Muppet (AM):

How about this for a title?
“The Two and Two Are Five Show.”

Pink AM: Are you crazy?
Now, this is supposed to be an educational show. Two plus two don’t make five!

Blue AM: They don’t?

Pink AM: No, you meatball!

Blue AM: Then how about
“The Two and Two Ain’t Five Show?”



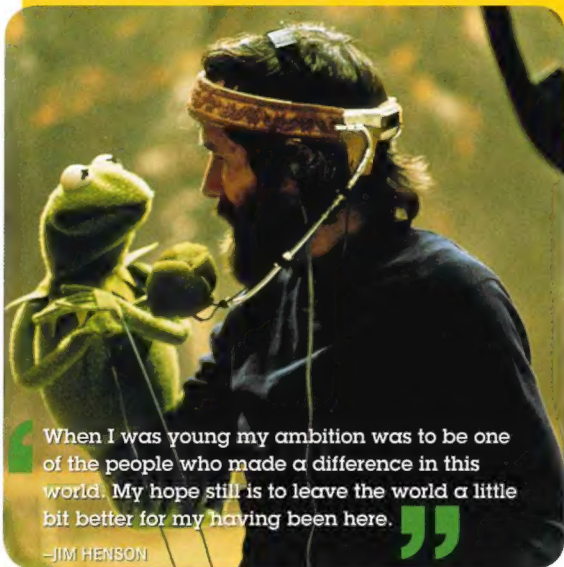
muppets
muppets
muppets

Meet the Muppets

Though the original idea had been to keep the Muppets off the street and separate from the human characters, early testing showed that young viewers quickly lost interest when the Muppets were not on set. Today it's impossible to imagine Sesame Street—the actual *street*—without its Muppet population.

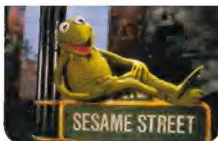
Jim Henson core characters: Kermit, Ernie, Guy Smiley

Jim Henson had been performing Muppet characters since age seventeen, long before *Sesame Street*. The people he worked with considered him to be not only a creative genius, but also the perfect combination of kind, generous, and silly.



When I was young my ambition was to be one of the people who made a difference in this world. My hope still is to leave the world a little bit better for my having been here.

—JIM HENSON



The first Kermit was built from Jim's mother's green coat



Fran Brill core characters:
Prairie Dawn, Zoe

Because Fran is shorter than the other puppeteers, she wears boots with four or five extra inches of platform glued on. That way, her Muppet stays at the correct height.



“I’m much more like Big Bird. I see Oscar as the opposite of me. But he’s easy to play. I just think, how would I act? Then I do the opposite.”

—CAROLL SPINNEY



Frank Oz core characters:
Bert, Grover, Cookie Monster

Originally, Frank Oz was going to perform Ernie, and Jim Henson, Bert. But comedically speaking, they clicked better when they switched parts.



Carol Spinney core characters:
Big Bird, Oscar

Spinney famously gave Oscar the voice of the cabdriver who took him to his audition.

There’s no hole in Cookie Monster’s mouth, so the puppet never gets to truly sample his treats. He simply crumbles the cookies and smashes them against his mouth, which reads on screen as a feeding frenzy



more muppets
more muppets
more muppets



Martin P. Robinson core characters:
Snuffleupagus, Telly, Slimey

These days, Telly Monster (played to neurotic perfection) is merely a lovable worrier, but originally, he was an obsessed, swirly-eyed television couch potato, hence his name.



The role of newcomer fairy-in-training Abby Cadabby is performed by newcomer Leslie Carrara-Rudolph. Sparkalicious!



Big Bird and Caroll Spinney have been inseparable for forty years, but Matt Vogel is slowly being groomed to take over. At their first meeting Spinney told him, "You know, Vogel means bird in German. This may just be the job for you!"



“Aw, get lost!”
—GRUNDGETTA



The Muppets Multiply

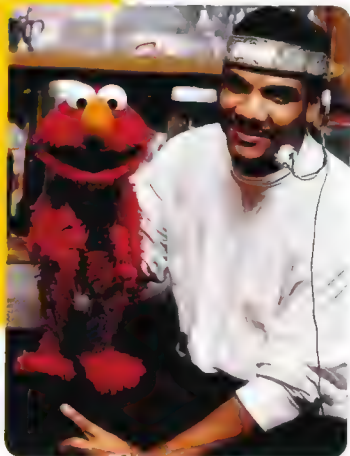
Some Muppets have lived on Sesame Street since the beginning. Others have come and gone. Some are brand new. Then there are those who are both old and new. That's because many of the original puppeteers have passed on their Muppets to a new generation.



Rosita, performed by Carmen Osbahr, is a fruit bat. Originally she had the wings to prove it!

Kevin Clash core characters:
Elmo, Hoots the Owl, Baby Natasha

Elmo started as a red Anything Muppet, but there was just something about him that intrigued the writers. Clash debuted as Elmo in 1984. He was the third Muppeteer to work Elmo—and the one to make him a star.



The first time Steve Whitmire officially played Kermit was for a CBS memorial tribute to Jim Henson. "I remember it totally," says Kevin Clash. "Kermit steps to the door and says, 'Hey guys, let's go. The show must go on.'"

on the set
on the set
on the set
on the set

Behind the Scenes...

It's always bustling backstage on *Sesame Street*. People start to trickle in around 7:30 a.m., and eventually producers, stage managers, camera operators, sound and tech people, wardrobe, hair and make-up staff, human stars and Muppeteers all fill the set. Somehow the atmosphere remains fairly relaxed.



Puppeteer Jim Mazzarino is Season 40's head wrifer





Old set photo



Inside Hooper's Store




Snuffy is so enormous, he has to be performed by two puppeteers and is stored hanging from the ceiling at the show's studio in Queens, New York.

...and Inside (or Underneath)

Our job is not to be seen. No matter how low [the shot is], we have to be lower. We're lying in a heap, arms and legs all over each other, in a big ol' clump. Every race, every ethnicity is on this set, I remember thinking. This is what the world should be like: Everybody's somebody.

—FRAN BRILL, PUPPETER





Have you ever wondered what it's like to work a *Sesame Street* Muppet? If you're working a large character, you're probably inside a hot, bulky costume, possibly with one hand in the air, able to see only via a monitor. For a smaller puppet, you may be on your back on a dolly, rolling across the floor with your hand up, or bent like a pretzel, crouching under a table... all the while saying your lines, meeting your marks, manipulating your character. To paraphrase a popular lyric: It ain't easy being a Muppeteer!



A group photograph of the Sesame Street Season 40 cast members standing in front of Hooper's Store. The store has a red and yellow striped awning with the name "HOOPER'S STORE" in white letters. The cast members are arranged in two rows. In the front row, from left to right, are the Muppet characters Abby Cadabby (a pink spider-like creature), Elmo (a red furry Muppet), and a large white dog with a red collar and a yellow and orange striped bow. In the back row, from left to right, are the human cast members: Julie Bowen, Sonia Manzano, Carmen Osoroivo, David Blum, Kevin Clash (wearing a blue and white bird costume), and Anthony Anderson. A white light fixture is visible on the right side of the building.

HOOPER'S STORE

Sesame Street Season 40 cast.



The People in the Neighborhood



Dr. Loretta Long (Susan) and Gordon were groundbreakers: a married black couple, they also were landlords and, eventually, both had careers. "Heady stuff," Long says now

Roscoe Orman is the fourth actor to play Gordon, though the first never made it to actual airtime. "Kids used to ask me, 'What happened to the last Gordon?'" says Dr. Long, "and I felt a little bit guilty, as if I'd buried them under the stoop."

For a show set in an urban environment, a general store seemed like a logical spot for humans and Muppets to meet. Hooper's Store was born, and Will Lee was hired to run it, becoming the first actor in the *Sesame Street* family.

Will Lee (on left) had appeared on Broadway, TV, and in films (including Hitchcock's *Saboteur*) before being blacklisted during the McCarthy era.



Matt Robinson



Hal Miller





Bob McGrath is one of only three original cast members still on the show (along with Long and Spinney). Prior to joining *Sesame Street*, he had a successful singing career in the United States—and was a pop superstar in Japan known as Bobu Magulath!

“We really want all of you folks to be yourselves.”

—BOB,
RECALLING EARLY
DIRECTION BY THE
SHOW WRITERS



The street is always changing. The newest humans to move in are Chris Knowings (Chris), who plays Gordon and Susan's nephew, and Nitya Vidyasagar (Leela), who runs the laundromat.



Though Maria (Sonia Manzano) is married to Luis (Emilio Delgado) on the show, when she first joined *Sesame Street* in 1974, she enjoyed some innocent flirting with

David (played by Northern Calloway).

David, played by
Northern Calloway



R is for Research

When *Sesame Street* debuted in 1969, three words distinguished it from the other children's shows already on air, the same three words that still do: research and testing. Educators, child psychologists, and curriculum experts are consulted before a single word is written. And the show's content is continually informed and shaped by testing before, during, and after the taping of every episode.

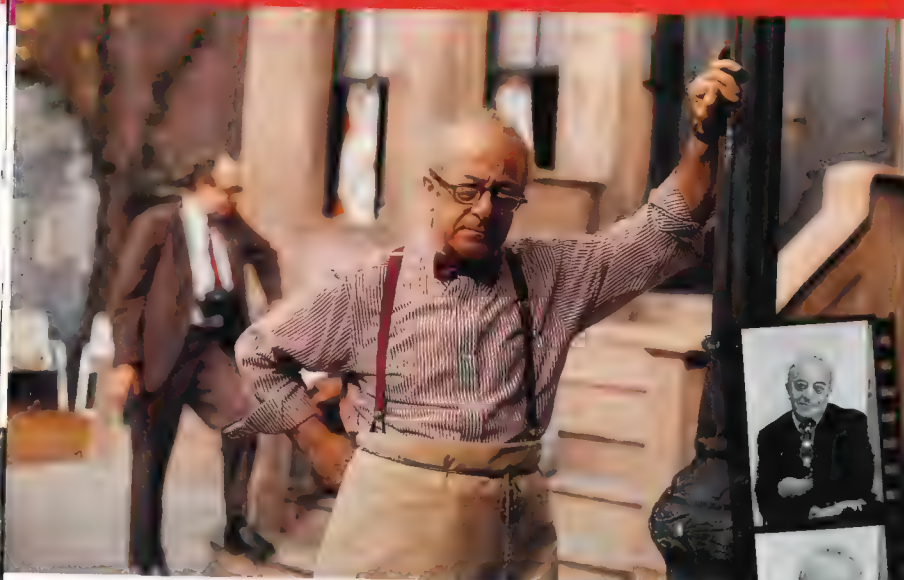
Sesame Street's research and testing model allows the show to tackle difficult subjects such as hurricanes. Big Bird's resilience after his nest was destroyed by a hurricane helped children dealing with similar issues, post-Hurricane Katrina.



A story was developed where the Snuffleupagus parents of Alice and Snuffy reveal they're separating. But testing showed that children were too devastated by the news to feel supported by the show's message. The episode went uncired.

When testing revealed children's attention was lagging for the last fifteen minutes of the show, writers came up with "Elmo's World" to pull younger viewers back in. This topic-based segment was an instant success.

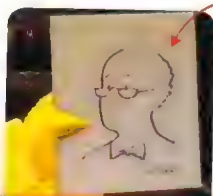




In late 1982, the death of Will Lee (Mr. Hooper) left behind grieving friends and a big question: How could the absence of the beloved Mr. Hooper be explained to millions of preschool viewers? The show decided against recasting the role, or simply having the character move away. Instead they faced the issue of death straight on. Experts advised against saying Mr. Hooper died because he was old—to a child, parents are old—or because he was sick—children get sick all the time. Eventually, the writers settled on the only answer that would make sense to Big Bird, spoken through the character of Gordon: “Just because.”

"Sesame Street" explains death of Mr. Hooper

Death of a Character Is 'Sesame Street' Topic



The sketch of Mr. Hooper that still hangs near Big Bird's nest was drawn by Carol Spinney

“ You know, I’m gonna miss you, Mr. Hooper. ”

— BIG BIRD

street music
street music
street music

WORDS BY
BRUCE HART
ON STONE.

SESAME STREET

MUSIC BY
JOE RAPO

ROCK

Handwritten musical score for "Sesame Street" in G major, 4/4 time. The score includes lyrics and musical notation with various chords and notes.

1. SUN - NY DAY SWEET-EN THE CLOUDS A -
2. RAIN AND PLAY EV-RY THINKS A - O -
WAY KAY ON MY WAY TO WHERE THE AIR IS SWEET
FRIEND - LY NEIGH-BORS THERE THATS WHERE MEET
CAN YOU TELL ME HOW TO GET HOW TO GET TO SE-SA-ME-STREET?
ITS A MAG-IC CAR - PET RIDE EV-RY DOOR WELCO
TEN WIDE TO HAD-PI PRO-PHE-LINE YO-U HAPPY PRO-PHE-LINE
HAY A BEAU-TI-FUL SUN - NY DAY SWEET-EN THE
CLOUDS A - WAD ON MY WAY TO WHERE THE
IS SWEET CAN YOU TELL ME
HOW TO GET TO SE-SA-ME-STREET



These images are
from the very first
episode's opening

The same tune, with
the same words, has
opened Sesame Street
from the very first show
in 1969, thousands and
thousands of times. It's
gone through about
half a dozen different
musical arrangements.

What's the Name of That Song?

Music has always been an essential part of *Sesame Street*—whether it's pop, jazz, classical, hip-hop, or opera, whether it's sung or played or just background, whether it's performed by a famous musician or an enthusiastic and adorable Muppet.

Sesame Street has always had a live show band, which has always had seven musicians. Two of the current members, Danny Epstein (percussion) and Wally Kane (woodwinds) have been members since the very beginning.



Mike Renzi started as a freelance arranger and composer. Since the late 1990s, he has been music director; in the band he plays keyboard and synthesizer. Renzi has won four Emmys for his work on the Street.

Animation Past and Present



Maurice Sendak's
"Bumble Ardy #9"

From the outset, part of the plan for the television show was to include sophisticated animated pieces that took place away from Sesame Street. For the best mix of styles and techniques, people from the world of animation were solicited—artists already at work in the field, or found in animation festivals, or students anxious to get a foot in the door. The results have been spectacular, with a roster of animators from award-winning illustrators Maurice Sendak and Mo Willems to Bud Luckey, of *Toy Story* and *Finding Nemo* fame.



Teeny Little Superguy was more of a problem solver than a superhero. The stop-motion animation segments were created by Paul Fierlinger, who used a drinking glass as his "star" and assorted other kitchen dishes as props.



“What I’m *not* looking for, is something that would be typically thought of as something that would appeal to children.”

— ARLENE SHERMAN,
SENIOR EXECUTIVE, CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT



The first person ever to have been commissioned to do an animation for *Sesame Street* is reported to be Fred Calvert; the film featured the letter J.

Bud Luckey did the animation for the ever-popular “Alligator King”



Innovation in animation on the Street continues to break new ground in the 21st century with two new and very different animated segments.

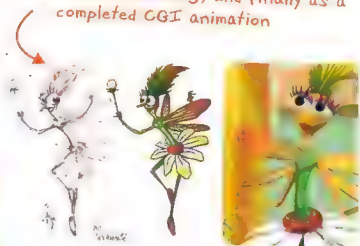


Aliens, pirates, penguins, wizards, and secret agents are just some of the clay playmates Bert and Ernie encounter in their travels



"Bert & Ernie's Great Adventures" combines the traditional art of claymation with contemporary computer wizardry to create a brand-new animated art form. Each four-minute episode is the work of a team of clay character modelers, set designers, animators, and post-production engineers. Each animator produces only about 3.8 seconds of animation a day.

Flying Fairy School teacher Mrs. Sparklenose is seen here first as a rough sketch, then as a final color rendering, and finally as a completed CGI animation



Debuting in Season 40, "Abby's Flying Fairy School" introduced the first-ever CGI animation of puppets to Sesame Street. Fairy-in-training Abby Cadabby and her array of other fairy friends introduce children to a problem and encourage them to "Twinkle Think": think outside the box by exploring creative ways to problem solve.

“Abby's Flying Fairy School has the quality and texture of feature film animation and allows us movement we can't get with the puppets.”

— CAROL-LYNN PARENTE,
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, SESAME STREET



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SESAME STREET

A Celebration—40 Years of Life on the Street

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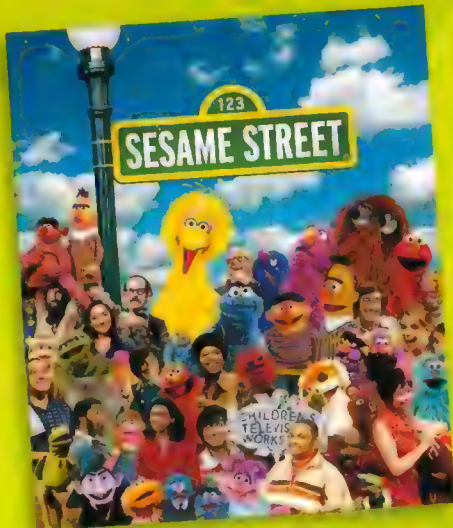
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